

CHAPTER 10

REPORTING TO SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) notified schools and districts of their KIRIS performance results when ready. During Accountability Cycle 3 this date progressively moved from January back to October of the following school year. This distribution included detailed descriptions of student level and content area scores that lead to a school and district's performance judgment. At the end of a four-year cycle, KDE notifies each school and district of their single performance judgment.

Final results for the third accountability cycle, a four-year period beginning with the 1994-95 school year and ending at the conclusion of the 1997-98 school year, were released to schools and districts on October 9, 1998. Since the April 1998 KIRIS testing completed the third accountability cycle; schools and districts received their overall accountability scores. Their scores were compared to each school's/district's improvement goal to determine its level of success. Each school's/district's accountability score for Cycle 3 was translated into a school's/district's performance judgment.

A school baseline was the weighted average of its performance for the years 1995 and 1996. The biennial school improvement goal (IG) was found by the formula $IG = (100 - B) / (10 + B)$ where B is the baseline. The school accountability growth index was the weighted average of its performance for the years 1997 and 1998.

REWARDS

A school or district whose final accountability growth index exceeded its Cycle 3 improvement goal and had met the requirement of reducing its percentage of Novices was judged in a reward status. There were two reward levels: Level 1 rewards meant that the school had exceeded its baseline, and Level 2 rewards meant that the school had exceeded its improvement goal. Each school and district in a reward status was provided reward dollars that were \$555 per share at reward Level 1, and \$1100 per share at reward Level 2. The school received a share for each certified position on the last working day of the last school year of Accountability Cycle 3. The amount a staff member received varied according to how the total money for the school was distributed by a vote of the majority of the certified staff.

If a school decided to vote on the distribution, the Kentucky Department of Education asked for decisions about whether teachers in both years of the accountability cycle could vote, whether one-person-one vote or pro-rata voting for part time certified staff was followed, whether by secret ballot, show of hands or other procedure was used, and whether absentee ballots were allowed to accommodate those no longer teaching at the school. The procedures and the vote had to be certified to KDE on a specific form. The Kentucky Department of Education also provided schools with some

Chapter 10

Reporting To Schools And Districts

allowable methods of distribution, including rewards for certified staff, rewards for classified staff, educational materials, professional development, field trips or other locally designed distributions. Combinations of the list were allowed, and the distribution also had to be certified to KDE. Reward checks were distributed during April 1999. A total of \$27,000,000 was distributed.

ASSISTANCE

A school was defined as in decline if its final accountability growth index was less than its baseline. If the final growth index was more than five points (on the 100 point scale) below its baseline the school was defined as in decline with parents having the option of requesting a transfer of their child to another school.

Schools and districts, whose performance judgment was designated as in decline or in decline-parental notification, were provided the assistance associated with failing to meet improvement goals in the third accountability cycle. The start of this assistance was implemented on October 9, 1998 (the date scores were received). Steps in assistance included a required school improvement plan, eligibility to apply for commonwealth school improvement funds (above district and state allocations), and eligibility to apply for a Highly Skilled Educator (HSE) to assist in the improvement of the school or district. Table 10-1 summarizes this information.

TABLE 10-1						
KIRIS ACCOUNTABILITY CYCLE 3 PERFORMANCE JUDGMENTS						
Growth Index (1997/1998)	Performance Judgment	Reward Share Status	School Improvement Plan	Commonwealth School Improvement Funds	Highly Skilled Educational Assistance	Parental Options
Growth Index > Improvement Goal	REWARD	2 Shares	NO	NO	NO	NO
Growth Index = Improvement Goal	REWARD	1 Share	NO	NO	NO	NO
Improvement Goal > Growth Index > Baseline	REWARD	1 Share	YES	May Apply	NO	NO
Growth Index = Baseline	EQUAL BASELINE	NO	YES	May Apply	NO	NO
Baseline – 5 < Growth Index < Baseline	DECLINE	NO	YES	May Apply	May Request	NO
Growth Index <= Baseline - 5	DECLINE	NO	YES	May Apply	May Request	Parental Notice

District reports were issued at the same time as school reports, and differed from school reports only in terms of being based on all students in the district rather than all students in a school. There are cases where students could not be assigned a school within a district but could be assigned to the district alone. Thus, district scores at a given accountability grade were not necessarily equal to the weighted sum of the district's school's scores at that accountability grade. The inclusion of scores (and/or noncognitive indicator results) from students who attend classes in a special learning environment, or who were not assigned to a reporting school, could alter district results.

School, district, and statewide-level results were released to schools, districts and media, a week to ten days in advance of the official release date, and embargoed until October 9, 1998. The embargo allowed schools and districts to review their results and communicate these results to faculty and staff prior to their release to the general public. Concurrently, individual student results were also provided to schools, both in a summary format and on a report intended for distribution to the parents/guardians of each student who took a KIRIS test. Test result materials sent to schools and districts included the following:

- Individual Student Reports;
- Student Listings;
- Item Level Reports; and
- KIRIS Performance Report.

REPORTING FOCUS GROUPS

To maximize the utility of any reports sent to either schools or parents various groups were asked to participate in numerous focus meetings. These meetings included parents, teachers, principals, public officials, and concerned citizens from across the state. Typically, each of these meetings included 10 to 25 people from one or more of the following groups: local PTA, Cabinet for Human Resource (CHR) Parent Group, KIRIS Elementary School Principals Advisory Committee, KIRIS Middle School Principals Advisory Committee, KIRIS High School Principals Advisory Committee, District Assessment Coordinators (DAC), and the Prichard Committee. At each of these meetings, the latest enhanced version of various reports was presented for discussion. Ideas gathered from each meeting were presented to the next focus group for their recommendations. By the time of completion of all the focus groups, numerous additions and refinements were incorporated into each report sent to schools and parents.

The remainder of this chapter describes in detail the final Accountability Cycle 3 KIRIS reports issued following the 1998 school year.

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT REPORTS

Two copies of each student's Individual Student Report (Appendix K) were sent to schools, except at grade 12 where one was sent since the students had graduated and a copy was not sent to parents. One report was forwarded by the school to each student's parents/guardians while the other report was for school use. These reports presented each student's performance level (Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, or Distinguished) in as many as five subject areas (Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, On-Demand writing, and Writing Portfolio) depending on the grade tested. Moreover, the individual student report also provided the percentile ranking information and an estimate of error. The performance levels of Novice and Apprentice were further divided into low, middle, and high categories for reading, mathematics, science and

social studies. This additional division of both the Novice and Apprentice performance levels provided both the student and the school with a more precise idea of where his/her achievement was located in relation to the next performance level.

The Individual Student Reports depicted the percentage of Kentucky students scoring in each of the performance levels for each of the subject areas at the student's grade. Each student's Kentucky percentile rank was given in whichever of the four subject areas (Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) the student participated. Until 1996, while the four subject areas were tested on the same grade level, a composite score for these subject areas was displayed as well. Beginning with 1997 the composite score was no longer displayed at the elementary and middle school levels, because the four subjects were no longer tested at the same grade level. The composite continued at the high school level because the four subjects were still tested in grade 11. Numeric and visual representations of error bands were provided for the percentile rank associated with each subject area. For the composite percentile ranking, only a numeric indication of error¹ was provided. Schools employed a variety of methods to transmit individual student data to the students' parents/guardians. Some schools simply sent the Individual Student Report to parents or guardians, some enclosed letters explaining results, while others asked parents/guardians to attend conferences, at which time results were explained in detail.

STUDENT LISTING

The Student Listing (Appendix K) reports contained information about all students tested or accountable to a particular school by grade level. There were several student accountability types reported on the student listing. These student accountability situations included the following:

- Students tested and accountable at this school;
- Students tested but accountable at another school;
- Students tested at another school but accountable to this school;
- Students assessed with an Alternate Portfolio;
- Students tested but exempt from accountability; and
- Students not tested and exempt from accountability.

This listing reported each student's name and his/her computer generated identification number. Along with student identification, each student's performance level and Kentucky achievement percentile in an appropriate subset of four open response content areas tested (Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) for the assessment grade was presented. If On-Demand Writing or a Writing Portfolio was required for assessment, the performance level was indicated. Schools used the information to not only review individual student achievement but also to make sure

¹ Composite error bands across content areas for summed scores were based, in 1996, on the sum of the student-level subject area error estimates (after equation 23 of Feldt & Brennan, 1989, page 116). A different approach was used in calculating the error band around 1995 composite scores, but both expressed error in terms of the percentile rank corresponding to the score one standard error above and below the student's obtained percentile rank.

there was an accurate tally of students accountable to the school. Scores obtained by students who were exempt from testing, according to Department of Education policy, were not aggregated into the school's total accountability score. However, these students were presented in the student listing, so the school could identify any inconsistency with their records. Scores obtained by students in other accountability situations, (noted above) were also presented. This allowed the school to know where each accounted student was tested and what scores were used to compute the school's index. Verification at the student level was an important check that each school performed.

Students who were enrolled in a homebound program, in a non-A1 program (schools considered A2-A6), Kentucky School for the Blind, and Kentucky School for the Deaf were assessed with the KIRIS on-demand test and submitted a Writing Portfolios or an Alternate Portfolio as applicable for the student's grade level. The results of the KIRIS on-demand and portfolio assessments were placed on the accountability roster of the appropriate A1 school that would have served the student(s) had the services of these special programs not been required. The definitions of A1 through A6 schools follow:

- A1. A school under administrative control of a principal or head teacher and eligible to establish a School-Based Decision Making Council. An A1 school is not a program operated by or as a part of another school;
- A2. A school, which is district operated, typically a vocational-technical school, where the membership is counted in other schools;
- A3. A school, which is district operated, typically a special education school;
- A4. A school, which is district operated, typically a preschool program (e.g., Headstart, Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) Preschool, or Parent And Child Education (PACE));
- A5. An alternative school, which is a district operated and district controlled facility with no definable attendance boundaries that is designed to provide services to at-risk populations with unique needs. Its population composition and characteristics change frequently and are controlled by the local school district student assignment practices and policies (i.e., the local district personnel have input with regard to the identification of students receiving services provided by the A5 school as opposed to unconditionally accepting court ordered placements). Students enrolled in A5 schools typically include:
 - (a) Actual dropouts returning to an alternate educational environment;
 - (b) Potential or probable dropouts;
 - (c) Drug abusers;
 - (d) Physically abused students;
 - (e) Discipline problem students;
 - (f) Non-traditional students (e.g., students who have to work during the school day); or
 - (g) Students needing treatment (e.g., emotional/psychological); and
- A6. A school, which a district operates as an instructional program in a non-district operated institution or school.

ITEM LEVEL REPORT

Much like the Student Listing Report, the Item Level Report (Appendix M) gave each student's name and computer generated identification number. However, unlike the Student Listing Report the item level report provided detailed information about each student's score. Each open-response question, on-demand writing prompt, as well as the student response and scoring to the common multiple choice items (only for the 1997 and 1998 KIRIS testing) are given. Each student's answers to open-response questions were evaluated on a five point, 0-4 scale. Below is the non-grade, non-item specific scoring guide, which was used as a framework for grade and item specific scoring.

- Blank A score of blank indicated a non-response. The student made no attempt to answer the question; the answer space was blank.
- 0 A score point of 0 indicated that a student's answer demonstrated one of two properties. It meant the student's answer was totally incorrect, or the student's answer was off-topic, that is, had nothing to do with the question, including irrelevant remarks.
- 1 A score point of 1 indicated that a student's answer demonstrated a minimal understanding of the question. The student's response addressed the question but showed little knowledge about the topic. The student did not develop a complete answer and answered only a small portion of the question.
- 2 A score point of 2 indicated that a student's answer demonstrated understanding of some of the important components of the question. While clearly communicated, the student's response demonstrated some gaps in the conceptual understanding of the question.
- 3 A score point of 3 indicated that a student's answer demonstrated an understanding of most of the important components of the question. While clearly communicated, the student's response demonstrated an understanding of the major concepts even though some minor ideas or details were either overlooked or misunderstood.
- 4 A score point of 4 indicated that a student's answer demonstrated understanding of all of the important components of the question. This understanding was clearly communicated. The student demonstrated in-depth understanding of the relevant concepts and/or processes. Where appropriate, the student chose the more efficient and/or sophisticated process. Where appropriate, the student offered insightful interpretations or extensions (generalizations, applications, analogies).

The student responses to both the common (questions common to all students) and matrix-sampled open response questions (questions that differed by test form) were reported. The student's performance level, for Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and On-Demand Writing were also indicated. To aid the school's assessment of student performance, the school, district, and state means were provided for each common test item.

KIRIS PERFORMANCE REPORT (KPR)/ (Assessment Curriculum Report)

The Assessment Curriculum Report aggregated student level information into either the school or district level. This report was fully described in *KIRIS Cycle 2 Technical Manual*, and was replaced in 1997 by the KIRIS Performance Report (KPR) (Appendix N). The KPR contained the following information (excepting grade levels where a particular component was not administered):

- Introduction;
- Academic Trend Data;
 - Reading
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Social Studies
 - Writing Portfolio
 - On-Demand Writing
 - Arts & Humanities and PL/VS
- Data Disaggregation;
- Item Level Summary;
- Summary Data;
- Student Questionnaire; and
- Accountability Cycle 3 Data.

There are four types of KPR's produced each year. Each KPR type has identical layouts. The only difference between each of the KPR's is their level of aggregation. The four levels of data aggregation are school, district, region, and state.

INTRODUCTION. The KPR introduction provided the reader with an overview of the contents of the report. It furnished the background for the various parts of the report with regard to grade specific content areas. The introduction reviewed the expectations that all schools shall expect a high level of achievement of all students. It also described the exemptions to that standard in the case of a) foreign exchange students, b) medical exemptions, and c) students with limited English proficiency.

ACADEMIC TREND DATA. The Academic Trend Data reported the most recent year's (1998) academic results along with all the previous years back to 1993 by grade level assessed. This complete data included the first two years of testing that antedated Accountability Cycle 3. The students' scores were aggregated by school, district, region, and the entire state depending on the type of KPR produced. The performance

levels by content areas tested were reported. The school/district/region/state tables provided both the number and percentage of students in the Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, or Distinguished levels. Non-tested or non-performing students were assigned to the Low Novice category in the specific content area for reporting purposes. Non-tested and non-performing students were students who did not respond to any question within a specific content area. The reporting of non-tested (non-performing) students provided schools with supplementary information in addition to student performance level. Also, the number and percentage of Alternate Portfolio students and non-participating students by exemption (foreign exchange, medical exemptions, and limited English speakers) were reported.

READING, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND SOCIAL STUDIES RESULTS. The on-demand performance results for each content area were reported as the second section of academic trend data. For each year of Accountability Cycle 3 the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished responses were tabulated. Within the Reading content area, defined by an Academic Expectation, were skills and strategies that students needed to use as they worked on the KIRIS assessments. Students' ability to make sense of a wide variety of materials including literary texts, informational texts, practical texts, and persuasive texts were also important skills. Within the Mathematics content area, defined by Academic Expectations, were four subdomains of Mathematics skills that students needed to use as they worked on the KIRIS assessments. These were Number/Computation, Geometry/Masurement, Probability/ Statistics, and Algebraic Ideas. Five subdomains were defined for Science: Life Sciences, Earth and Space Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Inquiry. The five Social Studies subdomains were Government and Civics, Culture and Society, Economics, Geography, and History. The mean raw scores (0-4 scale) for the subdomains of Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies were reported within this section. The subdomain data represented only the current year of the KPR, and no data for previous years was presented.

WRITING PORTFOLIO. The portfolio performance results for the content area of Writing were also reported in academic trend data. For each year of KIRIS Cycle 3 the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished portfolios were tabulated. Many goals of the writing content area, defined by an Academic Expectation, were demonstrated using the Writing Portfolio assessment. The writing portfolio scoring guide, used in the holistic scoring of the Writing Portfolio, also provided teachers with an instructional analysis useful in annotating student portfolios to indicate instructional strengths. The following areas were used to indicate instructional strengths: 1) Establishing focused authentic Purpose, 2) Writing for authentic Audiences, situations, 3) Employing a suitable Voice and/or Tone, 4) Developing Ideas relevant to the purpose, 5) Supporting ideas with elaborated, relevant Details, 6) Organizing ideas logically, 7) Using effective Transitions, 8) Constructing effective and/or correct Sentences, 9) Using Language effectively and/or correctly, 10) Editing for correctness. For the current year, the percentage of portfolios showing instructional

strengths was tabulated for the school, district, region, and state. Schools could examine their instructional strengths using this table.

ON-DEMAND WRITING. The on-demand writing results were reported in academic trend data. For each year of Accountability Cycle 3 the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished writing pieces were tabulated. Many goals of the writing content area, defined by an Academic Expectation, were demonstrated using the on-demand writing assessment. The on-demand writing scoring guide, used in the holistic scoring of the on-demand writing pieces, also provided teachers with an instructional analysis useful in annotating student portfolios to indicate instructional strengths. The following areas were used to indicate instructional strengths: 1) Establishing focused authentic Purpose, 2) Writing for authentic Audiences, situations, 3) Employing a suitable Voice and/or Tone, 4) Developing Ideas relevant to the purpose, 5) Supporting ideas with elaborated, relevant Details, 6) Organizing ideas logically, 7) Using effective Transitions, 8) Constructing effective and/or correct Sentences, 9) Using Language effectively and/or correctly, 10) Editing for correctness. For the current year, the percentage of on-demand pieces showing instructional strengths was tabulated for the school/district/region/ state. Schools could examine their instructional strengths using this table.

ARTS & HUMANITIES AND PRACTICAL LIVING/VOCATIONAL STUDIES. The on-demand performance results for the content areas of Arts & Humanities and Practical Living/Vocational Studies were reported in academic trend data. For each year of KIRIS Cycle 3 the number and percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished responses were tabulated. The content for these two sections of the test were not reported by subdomain due to the smaller number of items in each of these assessments.

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS. All students in the accountability system were administered a questionnaire at the end of open-response testing. Questions administered varied slightly from grade to grade in 1995 and 1996, but not in 1997 and 1998. Both the number and percentage of student responses to each question were reported. The questions included, but were not limited to, the amount of school course coverage in relation to test coverage, the amount of participation in various activities including: groups, projects, information retrieval, oral reports, use of calculator, free choice reading, mathematics problem solving, and use of mathematics manipulatives. For grade 12 students, some grades 4 and 8 student questions were augmented or replaced. Not all questions were reported on the KPR because of space limitations.

DATA DISAGGREGATION. The data was disaggregated at each grade level across all content areas. The number and percentages of students in the categories of Novice, Apprentice, and Proficient combined with Distinguished were reported. Data was provided by content area for Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Arts & Humanities, Practical Living and Vocational Studies, On-Demand Writing, and Writing Portfolio. Within each content area disaggregation was provided for:

Chapter 10

Reporting To Schools And Districts

Gender;
Ethnicity (White, African American, Hispanic, Asian, other);
Title 1;
Migrant Program;
Served by Extended School Services;
Participating in Vocational Technical Education courses (High School);
Disabilities (with accommodations, without accommodations);
Participation in the Alternate Portfolio; and
Exemptions (medical, LEP, other).

The disaggregation process only considered data scanned from student answer documents. To protect anonymity of respondents, no data were reported if a category included fewer than 10 students.

REGION AND STATE SUMMARY DATA. Region and state summaries provided schools with comparative data for each of the content areas tested with KIRIS. The percentage of students in the district and state at each performance level within each content area were given to help schools analyze their performance.

ACCOUNTABILITY. The last two pages of the KPR find the accountability information provided to a school or district. This two-page report has all their KIRIS accountability information. The report provided the accountability index scores by which schools/districts were evaluated for the third accountability cycle. Using these scores a school's/district's performance judgment was made. For each year of the third accountability cycle the percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished at the school/district level were reported by content area. The content areas reported were Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Arts & Humanities, Practical Living/Vocational Studies, On-Demand Writing, and the Writing Portfolio. The second page provided the schools/districts with their academic, noncognitive, and accountability indices.

An academic index was reported for each content area. Multiplying the percentage of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished student scores by 0, 40, 100 and 140 respectively, and summing the products computed a content area specific academic index. The weighted academic indices were combined with a weighted noncognitive index to form the accountability index. The Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Writing indices (75% writing portfolio and 25% on-demand writing) were weighted 14% each, Arts & Humanities, and Practical Living/Vocational Studies were weighted 7% each, and the noncognitive index was weighted 16%. For schools also interested in reporting only the academic portion of the accountability index, the total academic index was also provided. This index used only content area weights applied with the accountability index to compute the academic index; no noncognitive information was included. However, since the combined cognitive weights only equal 84%, the sum of the products must be divided by 0.84 to place the resulting total academic index on the same metric as the accountability index.

To provide a school/district with a performance judgment (Reward I, Reward II, Decline, or Decline with Parental Notification) the school's/district's baseline index, improvement goal, and combined growth index were computed. The last page of the KPR provided all of these indices. The baseline index, which was the weighted average of the accountability indices for the first two years of the accountability cycle, was used to calculate the amount of growth required of the school/district during the cycle. This growth was added to the baseline to provide the improvement goal. The average accountability growth index, which was the weighted average of the accountability indices for the last two years of the accountability cycle, was then compared to the improvement goal to produce a performance judgment. Each accountability report had a tailored message indicating the school's/district's performance judgment. These reports were further described in the *Interpretive Guide*, published in October 1998, which accompanied the KPR report.

This explanation of the score reporting system demonstrates that Kentucky reports the results of its testing program in a comprehensive, and detailed manner. Using the KPR data schools have the information to help plan, correct deficiencies, and move in a steady pattern of improvement toward fulfillment of the intentions of KERA, which is to produce world-class students in world-class schools.

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